



## HAYLEY BENNETT

*Bachelor of Laws (First Class Honours) - University of NSW (2008)*

*Doctor of Philosophy - (Faculty of Medicine) University of Sydney (2001)*

*Master of Science (Clinical Neuropsychology) - Macquarie University (1993)*

*Master of Arts (Counselling) - Macquarie University (1991)*

*Bachelor of Arts (Psychology Honours) - University of Sydney (1985)*

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### Clerk of Chambers

Michael Wilcox

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### Admitted to the legal profession

2008

### Admitted as a barrister in NSW

2009

### Also entitled to practise in

Australian jurisdictions (Commonwealth, State and Territory)

Hayley commenced practice as a barrister in 2009 and since that time has been involved in cases in a broad range of areas in both public and private domains. She further specializes in health law across jurisdictions, and has advised and appeared in areas including: Equity (testamentary capacity, knowledge and approval, undue influence, *inter vivos* property transfers; Family Provision: she is listed as recommended in the “*Doyles Guide of Leading Wills & Estates Litigation Barristers*”); Public law (health and legal professional discipline, high risk offender and forensic patient applications); Protective (guardianship, financial management, issues related to mental illness); and Coronial Inquests and other Commissions of Inquiry. She also accepts briefs in other jurisdictions where analysis of complex evidence, including expert evidence, is a central feature.

Hayley previously worked as a clinical and research neuropsychologist specialising in the cognitive and behavioural sequelae of neurological, psychiatric, and other medical and psychological disorders. Her qualifications in this area include a BA (Psychology honours), MA (Counselling), MSc (Neuropsychology), and PhD (Clinical Neuroscience). She also provided expert opinion to courts and tribunals where mental capacity and decision-making were in issue and sat on the Guardianship Tribunal of NSW (as it then was). Hayley has published and lectured in these areas, as well as more recently in the area of judicial decision-making and its neurobiological underpinnings.

Whilst working as a research neuroscientist at Prince of Wales Medical Research Institute (now Neuroscience Research Australia), Hayley decided she would like to practice as a barrister and in 2003 commenced a law degree at the University of NSW. In 2007 she worked as Tipstaff to Justice David Kirby of the Supreme Court of NSW, and in 2008 graduated from the law degree with first class honours.

Hayley maintains academic and research interests in neuroscience within law, and has been invited to speak to judges, magistrates, commissioners and tribunal members about the interface between neuroscience and the law in general, and judicial neurobiology and decision making in particular. She has also been invited to speak to legal and health practitioners about ethical decision making, expert evidence, and Succession and Health Law.

During her time as a barrister, Hayley has been a member of the NSW Bar Association Bar Examination Working Committee (2010-2017), has represented the NSW Bar Association on a Working Party of the Motor Accidents Authority (2011-2012), and has been a Mentor with the

NSW Bar Association's Mentoring Program (2016-2017). Hayley is currently a Research Affiliate with the Faculty of Law of the University of Sydney (Adjunct Senior Lecturer 2015-2019, Research Affiliate since 2020), and is an Honorary Research Scientist with Neuroscience Research Australia (since 2017, ongoing affiliation since 2009).

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

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### Legal:

**2007:** Tipstaff to Justice David Kirby, Supreme Court of New South Wales

**2002 – 2006:** Professional Member, Guardianship Tribunal of New South Wales

### Clinical and Research Neuropsychologist:

**2007 -2009:** Post-doctoral Research Officer/Senior Research Officer: Prince of Wales Medical Research Institute, University of NSW: Koori Growing Old Well Study (NHMRC Funded)

**2001 – 2006:** Post-doctoral Research Officer/Clinical Neuropsychologist: Prince of Wales Medical Research Institute, University of NSW; Study Director: MRI Predictors of Dementia with Lewy Bodies (NHMRC Funded)

**1997 – 2006:** Honorary Associate in Psychology & Lecturer (Casual): Department of Behavioural Sciences, Macquarie University

**1994 – 1996:** Consultant Clinical Neuropsychologist (Sessional): Commonwealth Rehabilitation Service, Parramatta Regional Unit

**1993 – 2001:** Clinical Neuropsychologist / Research Officer: Department of General, Geriatric and Rehabilitation Medicine, Concord Hospital Centre for Education & Research on Ageing, University of Sydney; Study Director: MRI Correlates of Brain Ageing and Dementia (NHMRC funded)

**1989 – 1993:** Research & Memory Disorders Clinic Psychologist / Clinical Neuropsychologist: Department of Neurology, Concord Hospital; Study Director: Subcortical Vascular Disease and Vascular Dementia Study (NHMRC funded)

**1988 – 1989:** Research & Memory Disorders Clinic Psychologist: Department of Geriatric Medicine, Concord Hospital, University of Sydney; Study Co-ordinator: Case-control Study of Alzheimer's Disease (NHMRC funded)

## ONGOING APPOINTMENTS AND RESEARCH

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### 2009 - 2023: Neuroscience Research Australia

Senior Research Associate (2009 to 2017); Honorary Research Scientist (from 2017)

Associate Investigator, NHMRC Dementia Team Grant: Our MOB (Mind Our Brain):  
Dementia prevention across the life course with Aboriginal Australians (2018 – 2023)

### 2015 - 2022: University of Sydney, Faculty of Law

Adjunct Senior Lecturer (2015 to 2019); Research Affiliate (2020 to 2022)

## LEGAL PUBLICATIONS

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Bennett H (2020) **M'Naghten's Trial (1843), Banks v Goodfellow (1870), and the neurobiology of intellectual and moral functions: Progenitors of the common law principles for determining testamentary capacity today.** Australian Bar Review, 48, 113-160.

Bennett H (2016) **Neurolaw and Banks v Goodfellow (1870): Guidance for the assessment of testamentary capacity.** Australasian Journal on Ageing, 35, 289-290

Bennett H, Broe (2014) **The neurobiology of achieving a "comfortable satisfaction".** Judicial Officers' Bulletin, 26 (8), 65-70;

Bennett H, Broe GA (2012) **The civil standard of proof and the "test" in Briginshaw: Is there a neurobiological basis to being "comfortably satisfied"?** The Australian Law Journal, 86, 258-276;

Hallen P, Bennett H (2011) **Kennon v Spry and the Elephant in the Room: Women, Divorce, and Discretionary Trusts in the 21st Century.** Trusts and Trustees, 17(9), 829-839;

Bennett H, Broe GA (2010) **Judicial Decision-making and Neurobiology: The role of emotion and the ventromedial cortex in deliberation and reasoning.** Australian Journal of Forensic Sciences, 42 (1), 11-18;

Bennett H, Broe GA (2009) **The Neurobiology of Judicial Decision-making: Indigenous Australians, Native Title, and the Australian High Court,** Public Law Review, 20 (2), 112-128;

Peisah C, Finkel S, Shulman K, Melding P, Luxenberg J, Heinik J, Jacoby R, Reisberg B, Stoppe G, Barker A, Firmino H, Bennett H (2009) **The Wills of older people: Risk factors for Undue Influence (Review),** International Journal of Psychogeriatrics, 21(1), 7-15;

Bennett HP, Broe GA (2008) **Brains, biology, and socio-economic disadvantage in sentencing: Implications for the politics of moral culpability,** The Criminal Law Journal, 32, 167-179;

Bennett HP, Broe GA (2007) **Judicial neurobiology, Markarian synthesis and Emotion: How can the human brain make sentencing decisions?** The Criminal Law Journal, 31, 75-90;

Bennett HP, Hallen P (2005) **Guardianship and Financial Management Legislation: What Doctors in Aged Care need to Know.** Internal Medicine Journal, 35, 482-487;

Bennett HP, Hallen P (2004) **Dementia, Cognition, and Testamentary Capacity.** Brain Impairment, 5, 69-70.

## SELECTED CASES

### Succession and Protective Law

**Lester & Ors v Lester & Ors; In the Estate of Dulcie Brown** [2020] NSWSC 958 (Family Provision)

**CD & Anor & EF & Anor (No. 2)** [2019] NSWSC 337; **CD v EF & Anor** [2018] NSWSC 848 (Appointment of a guardian and financial manager; costs)

**Daniel Walton v Terence George Hartmann as executor of the Estate of Wanda Resler** [2017] (Capacity to commence proceedings; led by Michael Willmott SC)

**Mitar v Mitar (No 2)** [2017] NSWSC 1308 (Costs); **Mitar v Mitar** [2017] NSWSC 647 (Family Provision; costs)

**Smith v Johnson** [2015] NSWCA 297 (Appeal, family provision; led by Lindsay Ellison SC)

**Bowering v Knox & Bowering** [2014] NSWSC 1107 (Capacity to instruct solicitor in Will construction proceedings)

**BFJ & BFK v Public Guardian** [2014] NSWCATAD 141 (Appeal from decision of Public Guardian)

**Sion & Ors v NSW Trustee and Guardian (Estate of Chamita)** [2013] NSWCA 337; **Sion & Ors v NSW Trustee and Guardian (Estate of Chamita)** [2012] NSWSC 949 (Appeal; oral contract, mental capacity to enter into a contract, estoppel; led by Lindsay Ellison SC)

**Waddell v Waddell** [2012] NSWCA 214; **Waddell v Waddell as executor of the Estate of the late Ronald John Waddell** [2011] NSWSC 1174 (Appeal, estoppel and equitable remedies; led by Lindsay Ellison SC)

**Gray v Hart & Ors** [2012] NSWSC 1435 1275 (Testamentary capacity, knowledge and approval; led by Chris Harris SC)

**Petrovski v Nasev; The Estate of Janakievska** [2011] NSWSC 1275 (Testamentary capacity, undue influence, knowledge and approval; led by Michael Meek SC)

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## Health and Legal Professional Discipline

**Prothonotary of the Supreme Court of NSW v Thomson** [2018] NSWCA 230 (fit and proper person; removal from roll of Australian lawyers; led by Patrick Griffin SC)

**HCCC v Jiang** [2018] NSWCATOD 78 (Professional Misconduct; impairment; de-registration; psychology)

**Vo v Medical Council of NSW** [2018] NSWCATOD 18 (De-registration review; medical practitioner)

**Clarke v Nursing and Midwifery Council** [2017] NSWCATOD 163 (Appeal against interim conditions on registration)

**Han v Psychology Board of Australia** [2017] NSWCATOD 174 (Appeal against refusal to grant provisional registration)

**Jiang v Psychology Council of NSW** [2016] NSWCATOD 104 (Appeal against decision of Psychology Council suspending registration – impairment)

**CWV v Medical Board of Australia** [2016] NSWCATOD 161 (Appeal of Refusal by Medical Board of application for re-registration; Impairment)

**HCCC v Follent (No 2)** [2015] NSWCATOD 106; **HCCC v Follent** [2015] NSWCATOD 31 (Professional Misconduct; Medical professional discipline)

**O’Meara v The Dental Council of NSW** [2014] NSWCATOD 19 (Appeal of Council decision; Dental professional discipline)

**Chowdhury v HCCC** [2010] NSWCA 56 (Appeal, Medical professional discipline; led by Gail Furness SC)

**Xu v Council of the Law Society of NSW** [2009] NSWCA 430 (Appeal, Legal professional discipline; led by Carol Webster)

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## Inquests and Commissions of Inquiry

**Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability**, Psychotropic medication, behaviour support and behaviours of concern: 21-25 September 2021 (Jnr Co-Counsel Assisting, led by Kate Eastman SC)

**Inquest into the death of Tristan Naudi**, 13-17 May, 30 September, 1 October 2019 (appearing for the Commissioner of Police, the NSW Police Force, and four police officers)

**Inquest into the deaths of Robson Pham and Daryl Jones**, 27-31 August 2018; 27-28 February, 1 March 2019 (appearing for the Commissioner of Corrective Services)

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**Inquest into the death of Shaun Bell**, 10-14, 20 December 2018, 29 March 2019 (Counsel Assisting)

**Inquest into the death of Jaxon McGrorey Smith**, 29-31 October 2018 (Counsel Assisting)

**Inquest into the death of Colin Parker**, 14-16 August, 7-8 November, 1 December 2017 (Counsel Assisting)

**Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse**, Health Care Providers and Regulators: 6-15 May 2015 (Counsel Assisting)

**Inquest into the death of Ahmad Ali Jafari**, 16-18 December 2014 (Counsel Assisting)

**Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse**, Yoga Ashram: 2-10 December 2014 (Co-Counsel Assisting)

**Inquest into the death of Michelle Griffiths**, April 2014 (Counsel Assisting)

**Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse**, May 2013 (Assist with Private Sessions)

**Inquest into the deaths of Natasha Lee Fitzpartick-Moore and Sarah Maree Evans**, December 2009 (jnr Counsel Assisting; led by Gail Furness)

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## Public and Health law

**State of NSW v French (Final)** [2017] NSWSC 1475; **State of NSW v French** [2017] NSWSC 400 (High risk sex offender application; Preliminary and final hearings)

**State of NSW v Tozer** [2017] NSWSC 109; **State of NSW v Tozer** [2016] NSWSC 1643 (High risk violent offender application; Preliminary and Final hearing)

**Davie v State of NSW** [2016] NSWCA 96 (led by Wendy Abraham QC); **State of NSW v Davie (No 2)** [2015] NSWSC 935; **State of NSW v Davie** [2015] NSWSC 413 (Appeal; High risk sex offender application; Preliminary and Final hearing)

**Attorney General of NSW v McGuire (No 2)** [2016] NSWSC 158; **Attorney General of NSW v McGuire** [2015] NSWSC 152 (Forensic Patient application; Preliminary and final hearings)

**State of NSW v Cruse (No 2)** [2014] NSWSC 128; **State of NSW v Cruse** [2013] NSWSC 1733 (High risk sex offender application; Preliminary and Final hearing)

**Aspen Pharmacare Australia Pty Ltd v Minister for Health and Ageing** [2013] AATA 649; **Aspen Pharmacare Australia Pty Ltd v Minister for Health and Ageing** [2013] AATA 197; **Aspen Pharmacare Australia Pty Ltd v Minister for Health and Ageing** [2012] AATA 362 (Merits review of administrative decisions, drug regulation, led by Dr James Renwick SC)

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[Murlan Consulting Pty Ltd v Ku-Ring-Gai Municipal Council](#) [2009] NSWCA 300; [Murlan Consulting Pty Ltd v Ku-Ring-Gai Municipal Council \(No 2\)](#) [2009] NSWCA 318 (Appeal, Reasonable apprehension of bias; led by Michael Pembroke SC and Richard Lancaster)

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## SELECTED INVITED PRESENTATIONS

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### To Judges and Magistrates (legal decision making)

**Unconscious judicial prejudice: The neurobiology of “prejudice” (or “bias”) in legal decision making** (joint presentation with the Hon. Keith Mason AC QC). [National Judicial Orientation Program](#), 23 February 2016 (Adelaide); 21 February 2017 (Melbourne); 24 October 2017 (Sydney); 24 July 2018 (Gold Coast); 2 April 2019 (Adelaide); [Judicial Commission of NSW: Cross-jurisdictional Twilight Webinar Series](#), 24 June 2020.

**Judicial neurobiology, unconscious bias and emotion: The neurobiology of decision making and the role of unconscious processes.** [Federal Court of Australia Annual Conference](#), 17 March 2016, Melbourne;

**The Rule of Law and Emotion: How do judges make sentencing decisions?** [Supreme Court of Victoria Annual Judges Conference](#), 18 September 2014, Yarra Valley, Victoria;

**Unconscious Judicial Bias and Decision Making.** [Local Court of NSW Annual Conference](#), 3 July 2014, Sydney;

**The finding of facts and satisfaction thereof: How “satisfied” must a legal decision maker be?** [Land & Environment Court of NSW Educational Program](#), 20 November 2013, Sydney;

**Magistrates and fast versus slow decision making: The neurobiological basis to thinking and reasoning,** Keynote address, [Annual Victorian Magistrates Conference](#), 24 July 2013, Melbourne;

**Dialogues on being a judge: Impact of neurobiological research on judging.** [National Judicial College of Australia Conference](#), 11 October 2012, Adelaide;

**Neurobiology Decision Making Workshop,** [Judicial College of Victoria Judicial Education Seminar](#), 9 March 2012, Melbourne;

**Judicial decision making and neurobiology: The role of emotion and the ventromedial cortex in deliberation and reasoning.** [National Judicial College of Australia Conference: Judicial Reasoning: Art or Science?](#) 7-8 February 2009, Canberra.

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### To Tribunal Members and Commissioners (legal decision making)

**The neurobiology of achieving a comfortable satisfaction.** [Administrative Appeals Tribunal Annual Conference](#), 24 May 2016, Sunshine Coast, Queensland;

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**Unconscious judicial bias in decision making.** Workers Compensation Commission: Arbitrator Professional Development Day, 27 November 2015, Sydney;

**The role of neurobiology in achieving “Comfortable Satisfaction”.** Council of Australasian Tribunals: NSW Annual Conference, 28 August 2015, Sydney;

**Bias and unconscious processes: When and how can “bias” facilitate judicial decision making?** NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal Seminar (Administrative and Equal Opportunity Division), 12 December 2014, Sydney;

**Cognitive Impairment and professional performance: How do Health Discipline Councils manage cognitive impairment?** Nursing and Midwifery Council of NSW Seminar, 2 July 2014, Sydney;

**Implications of *Briginshaw* to Tribunal decision making.** Health Tribunals of NSW Seminar, 27 August 2012, Sydney;

**Neurobiology and judicial decision making.** Annual Conference of the Workers Compensation Commission Arbitrators, 9 December 2011, Sydney;

**Neurobiology and judicial decision making.** Annual Conference of the New South Wales Administrative Decisions Tribunal, 16 September 2011, Sydney;

**The civil standard of proof and the “test” in *Briginshaw v Briginshaw*: Is there a neurobiological basis to being “comfortably satisfied”?** Keynote address, Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal Annual Conference, 18-19 March 2011, Brisbane.

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## To Barristers and Solicitors (ethical decision making and neuroscience)

**Ethics and professional responsibility: The neurobiology of ethical decision making.** University of NSW CLE, 15 February 2018, Sydney;

**Legal Practitioners and Ethical Decision making: Why thinking with your body may assist with ethical dilemmas.** The Office of the General Counsel in-house training program, 25 October 2017, Sydney;

**Unconscious Bias and Decision Making.** Australian Young Lawyers Conference, 20 October 2017, Sydney

**The Neuropsychology of Sentencing.** NSW Crown Prosecutors Conference, 19 April 2017, Sydney;

**The neurobiology of moral decision-making: What happens in the brains of white collar criminals?** (joint presentation with David Staehli SC), ASIC Conference, 3 August 2016, Sydney;



**Legal Practitioners and Ethical Decision making: Why thinking with your body may assist with ethical dilemmas.** Henry Davis York CLE, 5 and 25 March 2015, Sydney;

**The neuroscience of learning: When unconscious experience leads to intelligent decision making.** Annual Conference of Continuing Legal Education Association of Australasia (hosted by the NSW Bar Association), 17 October 2014, Sydney;

**Insights from neuroscience and psychology in Mediation,** NSW Bar Association Mediation Master Class Conference, 16 August 2014, Sydney;

**The Science of Decision Making.** Victorian Bar Association Readers Course, 14 March 2014, Melbourne;

**Improving Ethical Decision Making in Practice.** Queensland Bar Association Annual Conference, 9 March 2014, Gold Coast;

**Is emotional decision making consistent with the rule of law: Judicial neurobiology and reasoning in sentencing decisions.** Office of the Crown Solicitor Seminar, 14 November 2013, Sydney;

**The psychology of persuasion and the neurobiology of the persuadee,** Victorian Bar Association Conference, 16 March 2013, Melbourne;

**Barristers and Ethical Decision making: Why barristers should think with their stomachs,** NSW Bar Association CPD Conference, 31 March 2012, Sydney;

**Understanding the Psychology of Decision Making,** Legalwise seminar to Government Administrative decision makers, 8 March 2012, Sydney;

**How do judges make decisions? The neurobiology of decision-making and deliberation and the role of emotion.** Meeting of the Australian Academy of Forensic Sciences, May 2009, Sydney.

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## To legal and health Professionals (Expert evidence, Succession and Mental Capacity Law)

**Testamentary capacity – back to the source: Banks v Goodfellow** (In conversation with Richard McCullagh), Macquarie University, Succession Law, 4 May 2020, Sydney

**Life after Drivas – implications for practitioners instructing medical capacity experts** (joint presentation with Lindsay Ellison SC), University of NSW Edge, 12 March 2020, Sydney

**2019 NSW Court of Appeal Decisions in Succession Law,** Legalwise, 11 March 2020, Sydney;

**Estate Disputes Case Law Update: Key Decisions.** Legalwise, 27 February 2020, Parramatta

**Mental Capacity (the Medical Perspective),** Blue Mountains 2019 Succession Law Conference, 14 September 2019, Medlow Bath, NSW.

**Family Provision Update: Review of 2019 Court of Appeal decisions.** Legalwise, 5 September 2019, Sydney.

**Family Provision Update: Review of 2018 Court of Appeal decisions.** University of NSW CLE, 14 February 2019, Sydney.

**Testamentary Trusts & will making: Implications for capacity assessment & establishing knowledge and approval.** Society of Trust and Estate Practitioners, 22 November 2018, Sydney.

**Use of Experts in Capacity Cases.** Specialist Accreditation Conference 2018 (Wills and Estates stream), Law Society of NSW, 11 August 2018, Sydney.

**Expert Evidence in Testamentary Capacity (Session convener).** University of NSW CLE, 19 October 2017, Sydney

**Capacity, knowledge and approval** (joint presentation with Michael Willmott SC). University of NSW CLE, 21 March 2017, Sydney;

**Notional Estate Law in Family Provision** (joint presentation with Michael Willmott SC). Benchmark TV, 16 February 2017, Sydney;

**Dealing with a client with questionable capacity: Capacity assessment for lawyers** (joint presentation with Elizabeth Cheeseman SC). Commercial Litigation Conference (Legalwise), Sydney, 18 March 2016;

**The legal presumption of mental capacity: Implications for “issue-specific” assessment by clinicians.** International Neuropsychological Society/ASSBI, 4 July 2015, Sydney;

**Taking instructions for wills: The neurobiology of a client’s deliberation and decision making process.** University of NSW CLE, 12 March 2015, Sydney;

**Best Practice in Elder Law** (half day seminar), Chairperson, University of NSW CLE, 2 October 2014, Sydney;

**Succession Law update: Family Provision Claims and Mediation.** Annual Conference of the Eastern Suburbs Law Society, 30 August 2014, Sydney;

**Capacity Assessment for Lawyers: What courts are looking for when testamentary capacity is in question.** University of NSW CLE, 6 March 2014, Sydney;

**Banks v Goodfellow and Testamentary Capacity in the 21st Century: Implications for Expert Medical Evidence.** Prince of Wales Hospital, Academic Department for Aged Care Psychiatry In-service, 7 August 2013, Randwick;

**What lawyers need to know about cognition and behavior: A practical guide to the assessment of mental capacity**, University of NSW CLE, 7 March 2013, Sydney;

**The latest developments in Wills and Mental Capacity Issues**. Annual Conference of the Eastern Suburbs Law Society, 25 August 2012, Sydney;

**Capacity Issues in Will Disputes**, University of NSW CLE, 28 March 2012, Sydney;

**Wills and Mental Capacity Issues**. Annual Lawyers Learning for Charity Conference, Eastern Suburbs Law Society, 20 August 2011, Sydney;

**Testamentary Capacity and Expert Evidence**. College of Law Day of Wills and Estates, 28 February 2011, Sydney.

## PRINCIPAL AREAS OF PRACTICE

### COMMON LAW

Appellate

### EQUITY

Appellate

Family Provisions

Wills and Estates

### INQUESTS AND INQUIRIES

Commissions of Inquiry

Coronial Inquests

### PUBLIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE LAW

Appellate

Health law

Public law

Disciplinary proceedings

Merits review

## SECTORS

Government

Healthcare